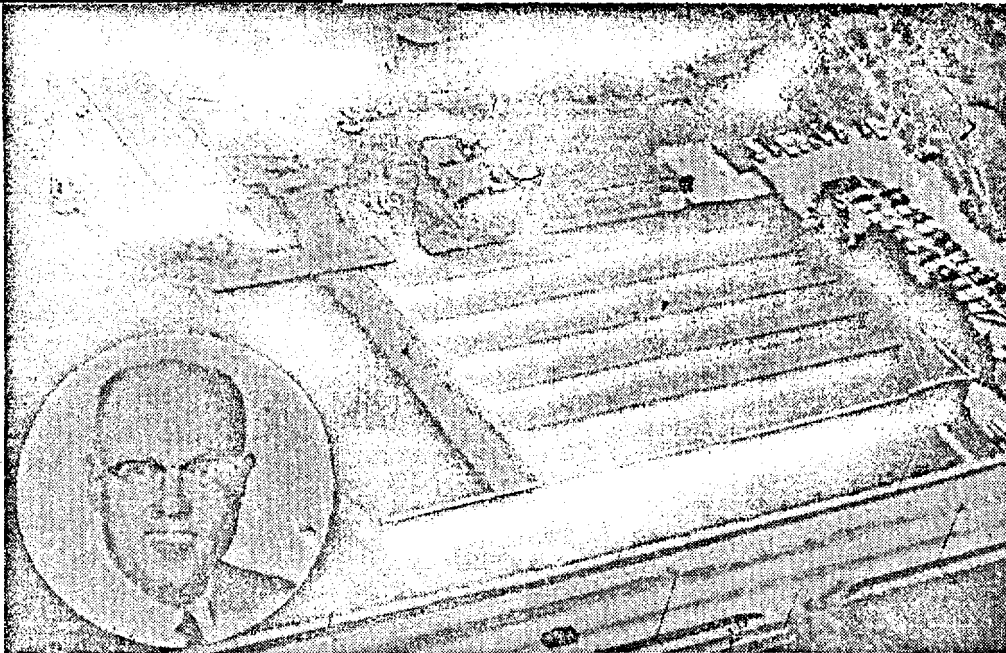


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Virginia Metalcrafters' Eckman: Profits In Obsolescence

Training Programs Needed in Area, Charles M. Eckman Tells Rotary

Industries in the Waynesboro area are faced with major problems in the areas of labor supply, unionization, and spiraling costs, according to Charles M. Eckman, president of Virginia Metalcrafters, Inc.

In a talk before the Rotary Club yesterday, Mr. Eckman said area industrial plants have already expanded operations "a little beyond" the available labor supply in both skilled and unskilled categories. He said training programs would be a must before production plants could expand any further.

Target for Unions

He said, too, that industrial management will have to face the fact that the Waynesboro area has "become a target for national unions."

And he told his fellow Rotarians, many of them industrial leaders, that the nation was "in the middle of a real inflation," despite what is heard from Washington to the contrary. Evidence of this, Mr. Eckman said, was the fact that prices for raw products are continuing to rise.

Mr. Eckman's remarks were contained in an occupational information program of the type scheduled periodically by the Rotary Club to provide a brief personal and business background of members and an insight into their company.

Native New Yorker

The speaker, a native New Yorker, said he was enticed to Waynesboro in 1953 by the pro-

spects offered by the old Both Stove Company, which "has since grown from a ramshackle, money-losing operation into a thriving industry employing nearly 250 people with annual sales of four million dollars."

Mr. Eckman said his company's growth had been due in large measure to the acquisition of several small firms producing diversified products. He said Virginia Metalcrafters had reached the point now where it would shift its emphasis from acquisition to product development.

Obsolete Products

He pointed out that most of the company's sales volume was in so-called obsolete products — hand lawnmowers,

wood stoves, and candle stick holders. The company president said that Virginia Metalcrafters has never been able to produce fast enough to meet the demand for its products.

Before coming to Waynesboro, Mr. Eckman recalled, his business interests had included a nightmarish coffee distributorship in Richmond, a "paper-shuffling deal" for the Veteran's Administration, and stints in newspaper and radio work. His first job was as a \$15 a week check sorter for the National City Bank of New York.

Mr. Eckman attended Swarthmore College, won his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin and his master's in business administration from New York University.

For two years, he served as a business administration consultant to the Central Intelligence Agency, later taught a year at the University of Richmond night school.

Visiting Rotarians at yesterday's luncheon meeting included J. K. Patterson, Floyd Leistra, and Edward Dowling, all of Staunton; R. A. Vanina, John Nottingham, and John Robinson, of Charlottesville.